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inherited when they have a common ancestry. Now it is found that of the 3242 marriages where both partners were deaf only 12, or 0.370 per cent, were consanguineous; while of the 894 marriages where one partner was deaf and the other hearing 18, or 2.013 per cent, belonged to this class. The 20 deaf children born from the latter class of consanguineous marriages constitute 13.2 per cent of the total 151 deaf children born from marriages in which one of the partners was a hearing person; while the 10 deaf children from the former class of marriages constitute only 2.3 per cent of the total 429 deaf children having both parents deaf. It is difficult to see why consanguinity should so intensify hereditary characteristics; but if it does do so, then this large proportion of consanguineous marriages between the hearing and the deaf accounts to some extent for the large proportion of deaf children. How far this goes to explain the facts can only be determined mathematically; and this the author does not attempt.

It is to be regretted that the author did not inquire more particularly in regard to the condition of the parents of the deaf married persons. The parents were simply included in the general inquiry concerning "other relatives," with the result that on examining the Tabular Statement of Marriages one is disappointed to find that it is often impossible to tell whether the parents were hearing or unreported. If this point had been attended to, these statistics might have been expected to furnish an important confirmation, or the reverse, of Galton's law of filial regression.

R. P. B.

Blatchley's "Gleanings from Nature." — Mr. Willis S. Blatchley, State Geologist of Indiana, has published in book form, under the head of *Gleanings from Nature*, a number of fragments of popular science contributed by him to the press of Indiana and to Appleton's *Popular Science Monthly*.

The essays are truthful rather than literary, and they give vivid touches of nature, the results of close and sympathetic observation.

The first essay discusses charmingly the harbingers of spring in Indiana — the maples, skunk cabbage, trillium, yellow-hammer, fox sparrow, and the birds and flowers that mark the end of winter. Other topics discussed are "Two Fops among the Fishes," "Snakes," "The Gnat Catcher," "The Old Canal," "The Iron Weed," "The Indiana Caves and their Inhabitants," "The Tamarack Swamp," "The Katyids," "The Winter Birds," and "How Animals and Plants spend the Winter."

The volume is well printed by the Nature Publishing Company, and very well illustrated, in part with original photographs.

This book can be highly commended for its honesty and directness of purpose. Its author stands on his own feet and neither poses nor gushes, and his work is worthy of its purpose. D. S. J.

ZOÖLOGY.

Artificial Production of Rhythmic Muscle Contractions.—

Professor Loeb¹ has pointed out that certain solutions containing ions of sodium, chlorine, lithium, bromine, iodine, etc., may cause rhythmical contractions in muscle, and that solutions containing certain other ions, calcium, potassium, magnesium, barium, strontium, etc., check such contractions. It is supposed that the rhythmic contractions are the result of the combination of the particular ions with the muscle. The rhythmic action of the heart may be a natural example of this kind of action.

G. H. P.

Evermann and Marsh on Fishes of Puerto Rico.—In the *Report of the United States Fish Commission* for 1899, Dr. Barton W. Evermann and Willard C. Marsh give an account of new species discovered by them in the late cruise of the *Fish Hawk* about the island of Puerto Rico under Dr. Evermann's direction. An elaborate account of these important investigations is in preparation. The present paper gives a preliminary account of three new genera of Blenniidae—*Gillias*, allied to *Tripterygion*; *Auchenistius*, a Blenny, allied to *Auchenopterus*; and *Coralliozetus*, allied to *Ophioblennius*—and of twenty new species belonging to different families. These are: *Lycodontis jordani*, *Stolephorus gilberti*, *Stolephorus garmani*, *Prionodes baldwini*, *Calamus kendalli*, *Doratonotus decoris*, *Sicydium caguaita*, *Gobius bayamonensis*, *Bollmannia boqueronensis*, *Microgobius meeki*, *Gillias jordani*, *Malacoptenus culebræ*, *Malacoptenus moorei*, *Malacoptenus puertoricensis*, *Auchenistius stahli*, *Auchenopterus albicaudus*, *Auchenopterus rubescens*, *Auchenopterus cingulatus*, *Auchenopterus fajardo*, and *Coralliozetus cardonæ*. Most of these are small fishes of

¹ Loeb, J. Ueber Ionen welche rhythmische Zuckungen der Skelettmuskeln hervorrufen, *Festschrift zum 70. Geburtstage des Herrn Geheimrath Prof. Dr. A. Fick*, pp. 101–119. 1899.